

STRENGTHENING EQUALITY BODIES:

EXPANDING DISCRIMINATION GROUNDS, ENHANCING POWERS IMPROVING CAPACITY TO REACH OUT AND COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY.

A European Roundtable

AGENDA

22 September 2015

Secretary of State of Social Services and Equality

C./ Alcalá 37, Madrid

Background

This European roundtable is organized in the framework of a bilateral exchange project between the Norwegian Equality Ombud (LDO) and the Spanish Council for the Elimination of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination, co-financed under the Programme on Equality and Conciliation of Personal and Family Life of the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area (EEA-Grants). The knowledge gathered through this exchange, together with the work on standards for equality bodies recently launched in the framework of Equinet, offer a solid basis for a general reflection on possibilities and challenges of strengthening existing Equality bodies.

Aim

The aim of this roundtable is to reflect in a small circle on the challenges posed by an expansion of existing equality bodies in terms of the discrimination grounds covered, its powers, its visibility and/or its accessibility and capacity to reach out to victims of discrimination and to come up with strategies and practical solutions to tackle them.

Structure

The roundtable will take place in closed format, applying the Chatham House Rules. The different working sessions will discuss the abovementioned challenges on the basis of the practical experiences that specific Equality Bodies have gathered when expanding their scope and powers or otherwise reinforcing their institutional position, their independence, their outreach capacity or their overall effectiveness. An introductory session on the existing trends and typology, the evolution of EU law and the current work on standards for Equality Bodies will set the framework for these discussions.

Participants

European institutions, leading staff of the Norwegian LDO and other selected European equality bodies, members of the Spanish Council for the Elimination of Ethnic or Racial Discrimination and independent experts in the field of non discrimination.

9:30

Welcome and opening session

- Rosa Urbón Izquierdo, Director of the Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality.
- Johan Christopher Vibe, Ambassador, Embassy of Norway, Spain.

9:45

Session 1: Equality Bodies: models and standards

- *Moderator:* Jose Manuel Fresno. Consultant. Fresno the right link. Member of the Scientific Committee of the FRA.
- Sarah-Jane King, Deputy Head of Unit, Equal Treatment Legislation, DG Justice, European Commission, *Evolution of equality bodies and EU Law*.
- Niall Crowley, Independent Expert, *Typology and trends of equality bodies*.
- Anne Gaspard, Executive Director, EQUINET, *The work of Equinet on Standards for equality bodies*.

10:45

Coffee Break

11:00

Session 2: Expanding discrimination grounds

- *Moderator:* Anne Gaspard, Executive Director, Equinet.
- Elisabeth Lier Haugseth, Deputy Director, Equality and Antidiscrimination Ombud, Norway.
- Marco Buemi, Director, Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali (UNAR), Italy.
- Ingrid Nikolay-Leitner, Director, Anwaltschaft für Gleichbehandlung, Austria.

12:15

Session 3: Enhancing powers of equality bodies

- *Moderator:* Ignacio Sola Barleycorn, Deputy Director for Equality and Non Discrimination, Spain.
- Patrick Charlier, Director, Centre Interfédéral pour l'Égalité de Chances, Belgium.
- Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive, Equality Commission, Northern Ireland

13.30 Lunch

14.30 Session 4: Improving capacity to reach out, engage with stakeholders and communicate effectively

Moderator: Niall Crowley, Independent expert.

- Pablo López Pietsch, Assistant Deputy Director, Institute of Women and Equal Opportunities, Spain / Sara Giménez Giménez, Coordinator of the Assistance Service to Victims of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination, Spain. Head of legal department of Fundación Secretariado Gitano.
- Randi Hagen Eriksrud, Head of Communications Department. Equality and Non Discrimination Ombud, Norway.
- Ann Kathrin Sost, Communication Official. Antidiskriminierungsstelle, Germany.
- Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive, Equality Commission, Northern Ireland

16.30-17.00 Session 5: Conclusions and closure

- Ignacio Sola Barleycorn, Deputy Director General for Equal Treatment and Non Discrimination, Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities. Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, Spain.